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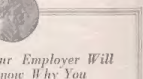

## *Some Day Your Employer Will Want to Know Why You Do Not Play More*

WHENEVER one is laid up for an editorial subject, he can always write discouragingly about the Fall of Rome.

He can point out with what awful speed America is hastening to the same destruction.

Rome fell because its citizens became too soft and craven to defend it.

America is full of Henry Fords, who cry out that we shall be committing a crime against civilization if we prepare to defend ourselves.

Rome fell because thrift was swallowed up in luxury.

Of all the nations of the earth, America is the least thrifty.

Rome fell because its citizens ceased work and devoted themselves to play.

Rome spent millions on her sports: we spend hundreds of millions.

See how perfectly the shoe fits?

But there are several important distinctions to be made. One is this:

The Romans did not play: they *watched other men play.*

America is still a nation where everybody works. It is rapidly becoming a nation where everybody also plays.

And that is a sign of virility: it is wholesome.

Fifty years ago a man felt like apologizing to his boss if he played; the time is coming when he will have to explain why it is he does not play.

Employers want men who can bring to their work more than mere dogged loyalty.

They want enthusiasm, a fresh point of view; a mind that leaps and sparkles.

Play does more than build sturdy bodies: more than cleanse tired minds.

It builds character, self-control.

The school and the office, as Dr. Luther Gulick has pointed out, are not democracies; they are monarchies. You may not like the rules, but you must abide by them nevertheless. You may want to quit, but you can't.

But play is different.

You enter it of your own volition: you may withdraw when you will. If you abide by the rules, it is because you *control yourself*, not because a master controls you.

If you want to quit in a huff, there is no one to prevent it. If you pout under defeat, or become arrogant with victory, you are answerable to yourself alone.

In business you are controlled: *in play you must be self-controlled.*

"The Battle of Waterloo was won *first* on the English cricket fields."

Many a man on Monday morning, when business wouldn't let up in it should, has held himself steady and won out because on Saturday afternoon, when a little ball wouldn't do what it should, he neither lost his temper nor his nerve.

It is possible to overdo play, of course.

Herbert Spencer was very proud of his game of billiards. One evening he invited a stranger young man to play.

The young man beat him three games straight. At the end of the third game Herbert Spencer put up his cue and said: "Young man, to play a good game of billiards is the accomplishment of a gentleman: to play as good a game of billiards is the sign of a misspent youth."

But most of us are in no danger of overdoing play.

We are much more likely to go puttering along, saying to ourselves that to-morrow, when we have accumulated my pile, I will retire from business and play.

And some day they will carve over me: "He was going to retire—to-morrow."

Don't wait for to-morrow. Retire from business this afternoon at four o'clock.

By to-morrow morning at nine you'll be back at your desk keen as a fighting cock.

*Bruce Barton, Editor.*

*No matter how much you play, you won't feel right unless you play right. I will be glad to send you Dr. Barrows little book, "Eating for Health and Efficiency," if you will write me, and send four cents to manage. 70 Madison Avenue, New York.*

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July 17, 1916

# Every Week

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*"'Whew!' answered a neighbor. 'You must have had a big income tax to pay.' 'Didn't pay a cent. It's easy enough to escape if you only know how.'*

*At this the revenue agent passed over his card. 'Would you mind telling me who you are?' he asked. The braggart glanced at the card."*

# Moonshining the Income Tax

By BURTON J. HENDRICK

*Illustrations by Wilfrid Jones*

A FEW weeks ago a group of extremely prosperous looking business men were sitting in a club-car on a train between New York and Washington. Their conversation, after touching a variety of subjects, finally shifted to the income tax. All of the members of the party, it presently appeared, had incomes that demanded a substantial payment, but all had escaped the toils.

"How did you manage it?" The question was addressed to a portly gentleman, every line of whose rotund figure suggested steel bonds and country houses.

"Oh," he answered, with a wink, "I was entitled to make big deductions. How did you get around it?"

"I had big losses in trade," was the smiling response.

"My income was all derived from municipal bonds," said a third, amid reverberating guffaws.

"I lost all my income in an earthquake," snorted another.

"And all I had went to the bottom in a shipwreck," howled another.

By this time the members of the group had lost all self-control. In loud voices they related how they had discovered loopholes in the income tax law, the cabin almost rocking with their amusement. They were having such a splendid time that they failed to notice a quiet gentleman on the other side, sitting attentively behind a newspaper. After a while, when the anecdotal millionaires had finished their stories, this person politely approached the group.

"Would you gentlemen all kindly give me your names and addresses?" he said.

There was general stupefaction at his insolence.

"Who the devil are you, anyway?" one of them asked.

### Who He Was

THE mannerless stranger handed his questioner a card. The latter glanced at it, his face fell about four inches, and he passed it to his neighbors. A sheepish silence fell upon the group as they perused the innocent pasteboard. It bore their interrogator's name, and, in one corner, the words, "Special internal revenue agent." He was one of the detectives who, at the expense of the government, spend all their time running down people who are evading the payment of the income tax! Sadly each man handed this friendly listener a card. In due time each one paid a good sized tax, including a liberal fine for making a false return. They were lucky to have escaped a term in jail, and they knew it.

Another revenue agent tells a similar story, with a somewhat different ending. Smoking-cars on expensive railroad trains, especially those upon which cocktails are sold, yield an immense amount of information. This agent, traveling on the Twentieth Century express, overheard an extravagantly dressed gentleman bragging about his wealth.

"I had an income of $50,000 last year," he exclaimed.

"Whew!" answered a neighbor. "You must have had a big income tax to pay."

"Didn't pay a cent! It's easy enough to escape if you only know how."

At this the revenue agent passed over his card.

"Would you mind telling me who you are?" he asked.

The discomfited braggart glanced at the card.

"Yes, I'll tell you who I am. I'm the biggest liar who travels between New York and Chicago."

A detailed investigation proved that this statement was entirely true.

Indeed, people lie about their taxable incomes for many and devious reasons. The majority lie with the intent of getting off the list. There are many, however, who lie for the purpose of getting in. That is, there are thousands of people paying small taxes who are not legally required to. The simple fact is that it tickles their vanity to be included in the income tax class; for, when a man mentions his income tax, everybody knows that he must have an income exceeding $3000 or $4000, according to whether he is married or single.

"Any newspaper editor," remarked a Western journalist, "who found that he was liable for the income tax would be so delighted that he would begin referring to his chilblains as the gout."

Again, corporations will exaggerate their earnings, and therefore their taxes, purely for the purpose of improving their commercial credit. Last year a concern that paid an income tax of $30,000 failed a few weeks later with huge liabilities. This payment—evidence of which could be shown in the shape of a rejected bill—was made merely for the purpose of creating an atmosphere of prosperity and increasing borrowing capacity at the bank.

### About Half the Income Tax Is Never Collected

FOR the most part, however, these are not the fabulists that give the government trouble. The income tax law is being evaded on an extensive scale. According to the official estimate made at the time the law was passed, the personal tax alone should yield $75,000,000 a year. Last year the Treasury Department collected only $41,000,000. Evidently this new law has produced almost as many moonshiners as the whisky and tobacco taxes, and smoking them out has added an entirely new form of adventure to the life of the internal revenue agent. Discovering a still in a hut in the Virginia mountains or in a New York tenement-house is a comparatively simple task; locating the gentleman whose income is $9000, or the millionaire whose "deductions" have been illegally made, involves detective work of a superior order.

At the present moment every revenue agent in the service is eagerly on the scent for suspects. Several hundred are giving all their time exclusively to the income tax. People who are filing false returns, or who are filing no returns at all, must not imagine that they are going about unsuspected. Many thousands have already been brought up with a sharp turn, and in most unexpected ways; so that, if you are not caught yet, there are excellent chances that you will be. Until now the Treasury Department has dealt leniently with such people, preferring to assume that, inasmuch as the tax is new, errors are made through ignorance. But the time is not far distant when this new class of moonshiners will begin to decorate our federal prisons.

Each year a certain number of people receive an innocent blank demanding certain confidential information concerning their private affairs. You fill out the blanks, sometimes carefully, more frequently carelessly, in most cases treating yourself with thrifty indulgence. Most people, after mailing this communication, imagine that this ends the matter. They have no conception of the minute and painstaking attention that this financial résumé receives in Washington. In the Treasury Building, in a large room filled with clerks, these inventories are carefully studied. The clerks go over each document line by line, analyzing every item, in the effort of finding something wrong. As a result of constant practice they are becoming amazingly proficient.

People occupied in tasks of this sort develop something like a sixth sense. The average citizen who "fakes" his return, or who even slightly exaggerates a depression of his finances, generally leaves traces of his prevarication. The income tax experts pounce upon these telltale signs with almost uncanny certainty. As any one knows who has filled out one of these blanks, he is permitted to make certain "deductions" from his income: taxes, losses in trade, bad debts, losses from fire, shipwreck and earthquake, dividends and salaries collected at the source, income from federal, State, and municipal bonds, and the like. The fact that a man has $5,000 does not signify that he has to pay the tax, as his "deductions" may frequently counterbalance this amount. Most people who "beat" the income tax do so by making improper deductions. As soon as the clerk takes his return, therefore, he pounces upon these "deductions"; and he can determine, almost in a twinkling, whether they are genuine or faked.

A man who uses round figures on these items immediately becomes a suspect. How frequently are our taxes or our bad debts or our losses in trade expressed in round figures? This seems a most obvious strategical mistake; yet thousands of dishonest tax-payers have been brought to book because they have made it. Many others are almost as crude in their methods. Here is a crafty gentleman who credits himself with huge deductions for taxes. But in the opposite column he includes in his taxable income a microscopic

item for rent. Now, a man who pays a big tax bill will usually have a large rent roll; so, in nine cases out of ten, such a person has written himself down a liar.

Be careful also, if you make a deduction for a bad debt, that you do so only once. Many people have made the mistake of charging up this item year after year. But the income tax clerk, as he goes over your paper, always has your last year's return, for purposes of comparison. This habit also leads to special investigation in cases where your income, $20,000 one year, has dropped to $5000 the next. Such misfortunes, indeed, are not uncommon, but a comparison of returns in the income tax department frequently shows that the shrinkage is all moonshine.

*"'Here, Ikey, why haven't you put in an income tax return?'"*

## How the Tax Saved One Firm from Bankruptcy

PEOPLE who do foolish things like this usually receive special visits from the revenue agent. A little persuasion sometimes leads to correction. Any one who wishes to argue the case, however, has every opportunity to do so. He must produce his books, and in some cases even send them on to Washington for scrutiny. This practice has frequently had excellent results, both for the government and the person or corporations affected. Thousands of Americans, and even business firms, lie in the most haphazard fashion. They do not know what their incomes really are; the income tax has given this information for the first time to a large number of people.

One concern recently informed the department that its payment, large as it was, had proved profitable, since it had gained a vast amount of information concerning the business and had instituted economies that had saved far more than the tax. Another declared that the payment of the tax had saved it from bankruptcy. It had compelled the managers to make a strict account of the business, and they had learned—something they had hitherto not suspected—that they were drifting toward a receivership. This enforced inquest had given them time to straighten out their affairs and reëstablish their solvency.

But, of all the delinquents, the taxpayers who make deductions for "losses in trade" have caused the greatest trouble. The ruling stipulates that the tax-payer can charge off only the "trade losses" that are made in the particular business in which he is regularly engaged. Any losses incurred in speculations on the side are not deductible. On the other hand,—and this is the provision that causes the keenest anguish,—any profits made outside one's regular line must pay the proportional tax.

One fine morning the revenue agent calls upon a Wall Street banker, asking for an explanation of a $200,000 deduction for "losses in trade"—an item that cancels his whole tax.

"Oh, that's simple," the banker answers. "I lost that in stock speculation—'war brides,' you know."

"But that is not deductible. You are not a stock broker, so it is not a loss in your regular business."

"It ain't, hey?" the banker answers, much wrought up. "All right. I have put down here on the other side $100,000 income, also made in stock speculation. Of course I can cut that out."

"Not at all," answers the agent; "you must pay taxes on that."

"But if I can't make deductions for my losses on stock speculation, why should I pay taxes on my profits in stocks?"

"I don't know; but that's the law."

And nothing more can be said. The agent drops in next door and asks a prosperous stock broker about a suspicious deduction of $50,000.

"Oh, you know," says the man of Wall Street, "that, besides this business here, I'm a farmer. No gentleman farmer, no amateur, you understand—no rot like that. I'm a regular farmer. I raise my stuff and sell it in the market. I do a big business in milk, cream, and cheese. I do it as a business. I keep books, pay salaries, run it just like my business here. Now, last year I made $10,000 on this business; but it cost me $50,000 to run it. I put the $10,000 down as income, and the $50,000 as losses in trade. Of course that's all right?"

"No, that's all wrong," says the revenue agent. "You can't deduct $50,000, because that's not your regular business—it's not a 'loss in trade.'"

"It seems unjust," says the broker, "but I suppose I must submit. Those farmers in Congress have got it in for us New Yorkers. But cut out that $10,000 income from the farm."

"Oh, no; you must pay on that. That's taxable income, according to the department's ruling."

## Steam Yachts and Art Galleries Classed as "Losses in Trade"

NATURALLY, the agent leaves the office as expeditiously as possible after breaking this cheerful news. But these situations confront him constantly. Millionaires deduct, as "losses in trade," the expense of keeping steam yachts, country houses, and art galleries. One has a racing stable on which the income is $20,000 and the outgo $100,000. The law demands that he pay an income tax on the first, but that he can not deduct the latter item as a loss in trade. The agents caught one venturesome steel man deducting a considerable amount as "loss in trade" which, on scrutiny, proved to be an expenditure for acting as an "angel" to a musical comedy show.

But these investigations concern only the people who actually file returns. In addition, many thousands make no returns at all. A man or a woman who has a net income of $3000, and who does not furnish particulars to the Internal Revenue office, is committing a serious offense. How does the government locate these malefactors?

The whole United States is divided into districts, each district being in charge of a revenue agent and his assistants. As soon as the tax returns are in, Washington sends each agent a list of all the people in his district who have filed. The position of income tax agent presupposes an intimate acquaintance in his section. Like an ordinary commercial agency, the internal revenue office must keep tabs on the financial standing of individuals. The chief interest of this Washington report, therefore, is the names that it does *not* contain. There is a doctor who notoriously has a large practice, and yet who has sent no report to Washington. Here is a lawyer who occupies offices in an expensive building, and has a stenographer and other accessories indicating a regular business. Why has he put in no return? Here is a business man whose house and manner of living certainly indicates an income of at least $4000 a year; yet his name is strangely missing from the list. Although another rides around in an expensive automobile, he tells Uncle Sam nothing about his income. Here is a man whose wife dresses expensively and gives ostentatious parties; certainly he can't do all that on $4000 a year!

The revenue agent has greater facilities than the average "credit man." He studies the real estate transfers and the tax offices in his search for people of property. The bank examinations made by the comptroller of the currency reveal who the big depositors and borrowers are—information that is frequently handed over to the revenue agent. Even the insurance companies must give their policyholders and the size of premiums paid. Merchants will tell, when pressed, about the promptness with which certain people pay their bills; trustees must open all their books relating to trust funds. Just imagine yourself sizing up the people on your street; it is not difficult to pick out those whose incomes exceed $3000. A man, like a revenue agent, who spends all his time doing this naturally becomes expert.

## What Charlie Chaplin Has to Pay

AND certain fundamental facts in human nature assist his work. Each delinquent who is brought to book almost invariably reveals others. A man who is "caught" will usually give away his friends. "Go! darn you, you've got me; now go and get John Smith!"—this form of tip has become almost the regular formula. "Landing" one member of a partnership usually discloses all the others. Anonymous letters constantly pour in on the revenue agent giving confidential information on particular incomes. This has become one of the most approved ways of working off personal grudges. Divorced wives take especial glee in revealing the incomes of their tax-evading ex-husbands.

In this country publicity is the great watch-word, and the revenue agents are perhaps our most diligent readers of newspapers and magazines. A year or two ago a popular periodical ran a series of articles on people with $100,000 incomes. Washington immediately referred all these to their appropriate districts for investigation. Leaders in certain occupations loudly brag of their incomes—an expensive form of publicity, as many have personally learned. Thus the headlines inform us that a movie actress has signed a $100,000 contract. That habit has poured thousands of dollars into Uncle Sam's coffers—money that would otherwise have escaped him. As soon as the news appears, the revenue agent promptly visits the manager; for this gentleman, by law, must deduct the tax from the lady's salary. Charlie Chaplin recently said that his new contract means $650,000 a year. Probably the one American most interested in this astounding news is the income tax man; for Charlie has kindly informed the American government of his liability for income tax amounts to about $30,000 a year. Charlie will not pay this tax; his employer will pay it and deduct the amount from the celebrity's contract.

Baseball players who publicly boast of their earnings fall into the same trap. The makers of graphaphone records will tell us what fabulous prices they pay the performers do them great financial harm for the income tax man at once comes around to collect. Indeed, the Washington officials give particular attention to public characters of this kind. The other day they pounced down upon the New York Hippodrome and obtained full details of all performers whose salaries justify taxation. The Hippodrome and the Metropolitan Opera House have to hand such tax money over the counter.

Opera singers, especially foreign artists, cause an infinity of trouble. These people are not only temperamental, but they have little enthusiasm in contributing to the American exchequer. One of the most distinguished foreign divas failed to make a return last year. When the revenue agent called, she tearfully apologized for her oversight, and agreed to notify her lawyer to comply with the regulations. "Ket ved be in to-morrow," she said, and she charmingly bowed the official gentleman out. An American member of the company—our native artists are not overfond of these foreigners—heard of the transaction, and called the agent on the telephone. In accordance with this confidential information, the income tax man called on the lady again—this time, however, not in her apartment, but at her state-room on an outgoing steamship. As soon as the official had disappeared the day before, she had gathered her belongings, including her good American money, and jumped on a ship bound for France. Of course she burst into tears when the unfeeling agent led her from the ship to headquarters, informing her on the way that she had made herself liable to a term in prison. She then paid her tax, which was a large one, and a $1000 fine for the attempted evasion.

This taught the officials a lesson; they no longer depend on returns from opera singers, but collect the tax at the source—that is, the box-office. They obtain itineraries whenever a distinguished artist starts on tour. As soon as the concert ends, the box-office furnishes an accounting. If the earnings of any particular performer exceed $3000, the theater must deduct the tax. In any case, the department has complete details as to income. So one can now get out of the country without paying his tax, as every one must show the State Department a receipted income tax bill before he can get a passport.

*"'Yes, I'll tell you who I am. I'm the biggest liar who travels between New York and Chicago.'"*

These agents vary their methods in accordance with necessity. A garment man who handles the East Side clothing district has a scheme that is all his own. He visits shop after shop, examines surroundings, and then makes an assessment of his own.

"Here, Ikey," he says, entering a tailoring place in breezy fashion, "why haven't you put in an income tax return?"

"I vas too poor; I ain't got no income."

The agent—of the same race as his victim—makes a rapid inventory. He turns up stock, and glances in the work-room to see how many people are employed. He seldom takes the trouble to look at the books.

"Here; I'm going to put you down for $9000. You've got that much. If you don't like it, you can sue."

And he hurries out to call upon the next man. This agent claims to be an expert that a mere glance at the premises enables him to make an assessment. Though a trifle informal, this method produces the desired results.

# Settled Out of Court

By WILL PAYNE

*Illustrations by Herman Pfeifer*

*"He went on eating his bacon and eggs, although books sunk into her flesh were dragging her away from him."*

NO doubt you have suffered that sense of great remoteness from a person whom you could actually touch by taking a step and reaching out your hand—that sense of great strangeness in a face as familiar to you as your own.

There were moments when Bessie Harlow, looking across the breakfast-table at her husband that morning, suffered such a deep wrench—as if he were already irreparably separated from her, a stranger to her heart. The most poignant barb in this was his utter unconsciousness of it. He reached no hand, gave no call. On the contrary, he went on eating his bacon and eggs quite as usual—although books sunk into her flesh were dragging her away from him. How could he not know? She blamed him for not knowing.

Even the little dining-room—there were only five small rooms in the white cottage—took on unreality. Someway, it ought to know. She sipped her coffee, but the lump in her throat would hardly let her swallow it. Tiny Ben, aged eighteen months, stopped spattering his saucer of oatmeal and cream and dropped the spoon. Bessie stooped and picked it up with fingers that felt nerveless. Returning it to the high-chair tray, a pale bit of smile just flickered in her gray eyes and on her red lips, and she surreptitiously squeezed the baby's chubby hand. He alone remained intimate. If he were older he would have known the trouble that ranked her.

This was the Friday morning following Labor Day in Plum Hill—where and when the foundations of living had suddenly slipped.

ON the Tuesday morning following Labor Day, as Lon Williams ambled down Main Street toward the Farmers' and Merchants' Bank, Plum Hill was much as it had been on any summer morning in the last thirty years. Main Street had been macadamized in the thirty years; the red brick Swartout House on the corner had been painted white; the two elms beside it had achieved a nobler height and girth. But the three citizens who leaned against the white-painted brick wall in the shade of the elms, smoking their pipes and discussing the prospects of rain, might have been just there thirty years ago. The little group in front of the post-office, morning mail in hand, had so leisurely an air that one imagined the passing of three decades to be a matter of indifference.

Lon Williams, cashier of the Farmers' and Merchants' Bank, paused a moment to chat before going in for the bank's mail. He was a spare, round-shouldered man, so near-sighted that he wore spectacles with thick lenses. His dense brown beard was cropped short, but even then it seemed to pull his head forward, as if its weight were too much for his thin neck.

With a double handful of mail, he went diagonally across to the new bank building—of brown pressed brick with white stone trimmings—of which the town was justly proud. It was a good hour before the opening time; but industrious, methodical Lon Williams always got down early and left late. Eph Stone, the negro janitor, was still at the morning's sweeping and dusting behind the drawn window-shades. The cashier went around to his desk and began looking over the mail.

Almost at once he saw a letter addressed to himself in the heavy handwriting of President Leffingwell. He opened the envelop, and thereby loosed an earthquake. The next moment Plum Hill was ruinous and desolate.

Marcus Leffingwell, with two associates, had founded the Farmers' and Merchants' Bank. When he died, his son Alf succeeded him. Alf was then twenty-eight. Ten years later a good many people were saying privately—for, as it implied derogation of Plum Hill, it was not a thing to be uttered publicly—that the town wouldn't hold him long; his talents demanded a wider field.

He was a stocky and sandy man, with a smooth-shaven face upon which all the features were strongly marked. His forehead bulged, his chin jutted, his nose was thick; there was breadth and solidity in his jaw and cheek bones. He seemed, as to speak, over-emphasized, over-charged. His red hair was curly, as if the energy radiating through it would not let it lie straight; his blue eyes snapped and twinkled; and he laughed readily, showing even white teeth.

He was a warm, overflowing, friendly sort of man. If he was asked to head a subscription for a new grand stand in the baseball park, he seized a pen and dashed down his signature before the committee got its business fairly stated. Forlorn old Sara Gregg, slinking into the bank and hovering in the background until she caught his eye, began mumbling tremulously that the rent of her two rooms over the harness shop was a whole quarter in arrears. His fingers dove into his vest pocket and brought out a bank-note which he pressed into her clammy, fleshless hand, with a cheerful word.

HE was tremendously active. Trebling the bank's deposits kept only his left hand busy. He organized the Local Improvement Club, and dragooned everybody into it with a laugh and a slap on the back. The club got Main Street macadamized and laid out a tiny park. He inspired and financed the canning factory. He introduced mint culture on the idle muck lands south of town.

But Plum Hill had only sixteen hundred inhabitants—one of innumerable Middle Western rural villages that reached about the limit of their commercial development as soon as the farms upon whose trade they subsisted were all taken up. Of late years Alf had gone much beyond the village boundaries. Every winter he traveled to California and the Southwest. The town heard, with more or less definiteness, of large enterprises out there—an irrigation scheme, oil lands in California, copper in Arizona. It was saying—behind its hand—that Plum Hill wouldn't hold him long.

Sunday followed by Labor Day gave a bank holiday from Saturday to Tuesday. Friday President Leffingwell observed to Cashier Williams that he would be running up to Chicago Saturday afternoon; he had some things to discuss there, and the discussing was just as good on holidays as any other time. He took the three o'clock train Saturday, carrying a brown alligator leather bag with silver mountings. It was remarked afterward, with amazement, that he looked just as usual—erect, brisk, cheery, with no mark of Cain visible upon him.

The note Cashier Williams opened Tuesday morning advised him to telegraph the State banking department at once that the bank was utterly insolvent, and to ask that an examiner be sent up to take charge of it. Arriving that afternoon at a town which figuratively sat dumb and aghast before the locked doors of the bank, the examiner found nothing but a shell.

So Plum Hill was stricken as by a lightning-bolt; a plague descended upon it overnight; in every block, almost in every other house, there was desolation and mourning. For, if anybody possessed money, vigorous Alf Leffingwell had got some or all of it into his hands.

There was Lon Williams himself—industrious, methodical, mechanical man, obeying the president implicitly, with too little imagination to conceive of Alf Leffingwell as an embezzler. It immediately developed that for two years the president had been draining the bank's resources into those Western speculations and forging the books to cover it up. Lon Williams had trustingly done as he was told. But the State banking department—outraged at the deception practised upon it and smarting under the animadversions of the metropolitan press upon a bigger bank failure which had happened that summer—took high and firm ground with the cashier. He lay in jail thirty-six hours before he could get bail. The State Commissioner of Banking, in an interview breathing righteous indignation, promised to put him in the penitentiary. He had a wife and three children.

ONE of Marcus Leffingwell's two associates in founding the bank had been Tom Dickinson—dead these dozen years; but his widow survived. She was "Aunt Martha" to half the young people in town. When her companion and nurse took her out in a wheeled chair—for she was crippled with rheumatism—girls ran to hand her flowers, and shone before her ashen, deeply lined old face, which shone back at them through its mask of bodily suffering. She loved these other children for the children that had been denied to her.

With the companion-nurse, she lived on in the house her husband had built in his prime: a square, two-story frame affair bedizened all over with jig-saw ornaments, like frosting on a bride's cake. Such had been Tom Dickinson's notion of a proper house. There were long, narrow French windows opening down to the veranda, and long colored glass panels beside the front door. That morning Aunt Martha had been found dead in bed, with an empty morphine vial under her pillow—stricken by the plague. All she had was the bedizened house and fifteen thousand dollars of bank stock which her husband had left her. It had paid eight per cent. regularly—sufficient for her living. But the bank examiner said the stock was utterly worthless now, and holders of it would be assessed a hundred per cent. An ill outlook for a woman of sixty-nine who could not get out of her chair without help. She preferred not to wait.

ON the next corner stood a square brick house with a cupola, and fluted iron columns on the veranda. That was Adam Benson's house. Adam, too, was getting old—his thick yellow beard nearly all gray now. His big freckled hands bore scars of hard farm-work, although he had handed over the three hundred and twenty acres—prime farm of the township—to his two sons seven years before. Adam had some bank stock; also he had crowned his honest career by getting elected county treasurer. A good part of the public funds for which he was under bonds were deposited in the Farmers' and Merchants' Bank. He was lying up there in the corner bedroom, with the white blinds carefully closed, in a precarious state of collapse.

Lesser victims were everywhere. Even young Ben Harlow was one of them. His burly, grumpy, rock-handed father owned the lumber-yard, among other things. When young Ben—not to the parental liking—married Bessie Walker, Josiah said to him: "I'll give you nine hundred dollars a year to run the lumber-yard. You can live in the Wicklow cottage and pay me eight dollars a month rent for it. When you've saved a thousand dollars I'll give you a half interest in the business."

It didn't sound easy, and proved even harder than it sounded—especially after little Ben appeared at the end of the first year. They had had luck with that—Dr. Brunt down from Ashland, eighteen mi'es, in a racing automobile at night, and then a trained nurse five weeks. Dr. Brunt's bill was predicated on old Josiah's various possessions rather than upon Ben's modest salary. Altogether it set them back fearfully.

At the end of two years and a half Ben had saved six hundred and nine dollars. It was on deposit in the Farmers' and Merchants' Bank. The bank failure had

bit Josiah, too. He was not in an agreeable temper. Ben was wondering, with a downcast mind, whether or not he would regard that six hundred and nine dollars as saved toward the thousand.

Wondering about that, not hopefully, he left the Winklow cottage on the Friday morning after the failure, and set out with long strides for the lumber-yard. There was another wonder, bigger than that about the six hundred and nine dollars, more poignant than whether Adam Benson was going to pull through or even than whether Lon Williams would go to the penitentiary: a wonder that had an element of terror. How could Alf Leffingwell have done it?

Many, really, were wondering that—How could he have done it? A warm, genial, kindly man; a man ready to laugh and to give; a man always rich, by Plum Hill standards—how could he have loosed this plague upon people he had known all his life, people who trusted him—striking them down with death and despair, blasting their hopes, maiming their lives? How could Alf Leffingwell have done that?

Some said he did it because he was a thief and a villain for whom hanging would be too tender a mercy. Ben and others judged him with great severity—thought no punishment too much for his crime, hoped hourly to hear he had been caught and was returning to a long term of imprisonment. Yet they wondered. Ben's way to the lumber-yard took him down Oak and Maple streets. He passed Lon Williams' small, neat house, Adam Benson's, Aunt Martha Dickinson's house.

But there was another—set well back from the street in a lawn that occupied half a block and had been planned and planted by a landscape gardener from Ashland: a house more spacious than any of the others and in a smarter style, with rough brick for the first story and brown stucco for the second. It was shut now, with locked doors and drawn shades; empty—for Mrs. Leffingwell had taken the two children and gone to her mother's in Plainwell. That house, someway, was more tragic than any of the others, the very seat of the tragedy. How could Alf have done it?

HALF an hour later Ben's wife passed along the same streets. It was early for her to be out, but she had let the forenoon's housework go, for her business could wait no longer. She had left little Ben in care of young Mrs. Worthington next door, for whom she often did a like neighborly office in respect of three-year-old Maggie. Housewives without maids know how to help one another.

The smart house with rough brick below and brown stucco above drew Bessie Harlow's eyes, too; but she turned off at that corner—down Beech Street half a block to a two-story white frame house with green blinds, whose simple, self-respecting harmony had been derived from a sound New England model. Judge Silas Peck lived there, and it was he who opened the door when she rang.

He was usually spoken of as Judge Silas Peck rather than merely Judge Peck. He was seventy now—a lean old man in slippers and baggy trousers and a wrinkled sack-coat. As usual, he wore a white shirt and standing collar with a small black bow tie. The left sleeve of the coat was empty to within six inches of the shoulder and pinned to the breast of his coat. He had lost that arm, when eighteen years old, at the battle of Kenesaw Mountain. His thin face, of the tint of old ivory, was finely wrinkled, and shaven except for a bushy white mustache. A strong nose, slightly hooked, thrust out from it. He was bald except for a fringe of white hair, and the big shiny dome above his thick white eyebrows seemed oversized.

He had been judge for thirty years—first, for several terms, probate judge; then, for many more terms, judge of the circuit court; finally a justice of the Supreme Court of the State, from which he had resigned just before his seventieth birthday. For a long time, on the circuit bench, he had the reputation of being a stern judge. But he did not look stern now.

Framed in the modest dignity of his little colonial doorway, he lighted up when he saw who his caller was. His blue eyes, behind gold-bowed spectacles, beamed, and he made an odd little motion with the stump of his left arm,—gave it a kind of flop,—as he had a way of doing when pleased. He held out his right hand and chuckled, "Why, it's Bessie Walker—or Harlow, I should say!"

He had known her all her life, and her

*"A warm, genial, kindly man—how could he have done this thing?"*

mother before she married Elton Walker; yet, if all the conversations between them in all her life had been put together, they would probably not have taken up three hours. He had known her—to say, "Good morning, Bessie"; or, "How are you today, Bessie?" or, "Is your mother quite well now?" or to stop and talk three minutes about nothing in particular.

She had always pleased him, as a pretty, merry creature naturally pleases. He had smiled to himself and flopped his arm over her shining face under a tangle of brown curls as she raced by to her first-grade room in the public school. He had chuckled to see her tussle in the snow, with shouts of laughter, when the curly hair was done up in quite young-ladyish fashion and the cap on top of it reached fairly to his shoulder. He was pleased that she invited him to her wedding, and would have gone if he had happened to be in Plum Hill at the time. He was glad she was marrying Ben Harlow, who was of the right sort.

That is the way he had known her, with a kind of detached, particularized affection; for much of his life, especially of late years, had been spent away from Plum Hill. It is doubtful that he could have remembered now whether her baby was a boy or a girl. But he was pleased to see her on his door-step. He flopped the stump of his arm and his eyes beamed.

IT was a pretty young woman who looked up at him, with a round face, a straight little nose, curved red lips, and gray eyes. He had hardly extended his hand before he saw something in the upturned gray eyes.

"I want to see you, Judge Peck. I want to tell you something," she said breathlessly, with a little failing of her voice. Her lips trembled.

The smile went off his own face.

"Come in, Bessie," he said gravely, and put his released hand on her shoulder an instant.

He knew it at once—that look in her gray eyes. What an endless procession of entangled men and women had marched before him, looking up with that dumb hope and fear of the judgment!

They went into the parlor to the right of the little hall, and he ran up the window-shades to let in all the morning sunshine before taking a seat opposite her. She put a finger up to her lips to stop them from trembling. Her eyes clung to him. As she spoke, falteringly at first, he saw her breast labor for breath:

"I want to tell you. . . . I know what I want to tell; but it's hard to know how to tell it. . . . It's about Alf Leffingwell—the bank. You know, I worked in the bank nearly a year before I was married."

He remembered it then, and said "yes" gently.

"Well, the Women's Club here is collecting money to build a club-house. They want to get twelve hundred dollars. We get up entertainments, and give dinners, and make some money that way, you know; and the women subscribe what they can. The men have given something. Mr. Leffingwell gave two hundred dollars. It takes a long time, you see. They made me treasurer—I suppose because I'd had some experience in the bank. All I did in the bank was write letters and use an adding-machine and attend to the files, and little things like that. But they said I'd had as much business experience as anybody, so they made me treasurer."

Once launched, she spoke more firmly; but here she hesitated, putting a finger to her lips, and her eyes questioned him. Then, with very near a sob:

"I wasn't well brought up, Judge Peck! I guess you know my father."

He understood what sort of knowing she meant, and murmured "yes," combing down his bushy white mustache with a thumb and bent forefinger.

In one degree or another, everybody knew "Elt" Walker,—a large, beefily handsome, loquacious man, employed for many years as traveling salesman for a Grand Rapids furniture concern; appearing in Plum Hill intermittently, usually with a new suit of clothes and always with a new stock of stories. He had a hearty, easy manner, and impressed strangers immediately. Everybody knew he was a good fellow. More extended acquaintance produced knowledge that his statements could not always be relied upon. All the merchants in Plum Hill knew he did not pay his debts. Judge Peck happened to have some further knowledge which he doubted that even Bessie possessed.

"I grew up careless," she said. "I suppose it's in my blood. Father would take me up to Ashland and give me twenty dollars to buy a new hat and shoes with, when he wasn't paying Aunt Sara what he had agreed to pay for my board. It seems strange now, but I never thought anything in particular about that. He always wanted me to look right, so he'd be proud to take me around and introduce me to his friends. Twice Hutton & Simpson in Ashland refused to let me have things on father's credit when he'd written me to buy them there. I wasn't very much humiliated at that. I was just angry because I couldn't get the things. Father fixed it up with them someway, and I went back and bought other things just as cheerfully. You see, I'm a dead beat, too."

She put her finger to her lips and tears came into her eyes.

"You see, Ben and I have had to live very close. Father Harlow allows Ben nine hundred dollars a year. And he said when we'd saved a thousand dollars he would give Ben an interest in the lumber-yard. We've tried hard; but you know—with the baby and my sickness when he was born, it's been hard. I've done the housework, except the washing. We never go anywhere that costs more than a half dollar. Ben even gave up smoking a pipe.

"Father Harlow didn't want Ben to marry me. I suppose he thought I'd be extravagant. It seems he had some money troubles with father. He thinks spending money for anything except bread and butter and overalls is a sin. He never liked me. He doesn't like me now. He doesn't like it because I put the washing out. He has always charged it up against me as a kind of sinful extravagance because I was so sick when the baby came and we sent up to Ashland for Dr. Brunt.

"I don't like him—I might as well tell you that. Ben and I are young now. We'd like to have some good times while we can enjoy them, and not be pinched down to the last penny always. That old man might as well put us both in jail at hard labor. A little of the money right now that he will finally leave Ben would be that much life to us. But that isn't his way. Of course, I keep my tongue between my teeth before Ben. He's grown up taking his father for granted just as I grew up taking mine for granted. I never say what I think about it. I love my husband, Judge Peck. There never was a better husband.

"There would be no use of my telling you this about Father Harlow, only it has an influence on what I did. It's true, I hated it and resented it. I suppose I had no right to, but I did. I want to tell you honestly, Judge Peck. I was vain of my hands, and I couldn't keep them looking nice. Housework roughened and reddened them. I kept breaking my finger-nails, so I had to cut them down to the quick. I burned my arms and wrists over the cook-stove. You'll think that's terribly silly. I know it's silly. But I resented it. Sometimes I thought my hair smelled of dish-water. You see, I'm vain.

She said it mournfully, and paused a moment to consider whether he could understand.

"I think every young woman wants to look nice—to be attractive. It's kind of like death to see that go. Father Harlow has a good deal of money, you know. I would be so easy for him to save me some—some wrinkles and stubby finger-nails and rough hands—before the time came when I wouldn't be young any longer and it wouldn't matter much. So I felt rebellious all the time.

"There were other things—like going up to Ashland to a theater once in a while and having a little spree with other young couples here. I'd been brought up to spend money when I had it and have a good time when I could. I hated having to put all those things off—wait for them. I didn't have the strength to wait," she added desolately, and her eyes filled again.

"WE'D been married two years last spring, and my clothes were all worn out. I was pretty well supplied when we were married, and I'd really bought just as little as possible. I wanted so much to be economical and help Ben save. All my last winter things were made over. Aunt Sara and I made them over with a little help from Mrs. Dewstow. I didn't think Mrs. Dewstow's dressmaking was good enough before I married. You don't know how I hate to be shabby. You'll see what a fool I am—I don't feel respectable in a dress that's all faded in front and shiny around the seams and bunches up across the shoulders.

"But this spring it seemed as though everything had given out. I couldn't bear to take the money from Ben for good clothes, and I couldn't bear to buy bad ones. Oh, I know I'm an awful fool. Ada Worthington bought cloth at Reek's and had Mrs. Dewstow make her a spring suit. It cost her only eleven dollars and a half. I was going to do the same; but I waited to see how Ada's came out. There was a lump as big as a walnut in my throat for an hour after I saw it. I could hardly keep tears out of my eyes. That's the sort I am, Judge Peck!"

For the first time her eyes fell; her under lip quivered.

"My father was here in April. He was ashamed of me, and said so. Father is just as vain about clothes as I am. He wanted to blame Ben; but I stopped that quick enough. He said he'd see that I had something decent to wear. As soon as he got back to Grand Rapids, he wrote me to meet him in Ashland when he started out on his next trip and he'd give me fifty dollars to buy a suit and hat. Of course, taking money from father came easy enough. I meant to get a pair of shoes and some gloves out of the fifty dollars, too—buying a cheaper suit than father intended. Well, I showed the letter to Ben. He didn't quite like it; but he knew I really needed some new clothes, so he just laughed and said 'all right.'

"Of course I was happy. Getting the

clothes was the great thing with me. I wanted them so much that to get them any way would have made me happy. I was to meet father in Ashland Tuesday—that was the second day of May. I was going up on the one o'clock train. I was going to take Benny over to Aunt Sara's before noon, so he could have his nap there right after dinner, as he always does. Then she'd keep him until I came back at half past six."

SHE seemed to linger over these details. Once more she looked at the floor, and for a moment was silent. Looking up again, she murmured, in a bodiless voice:

"I don't think I can tell you what really happened that day. I can hardly understand it myself. When I think of it now, it don't seem real."

She was silent another moment; her eyes looked frightened. She went on slowly, with a little halt between the short sentences:

"You see, I'd taken Benny over to Aunt Sara's. That was just after eleven o'clock. I was on my way back home, when young Charley Smith hailed me. He was on his bicycle. He'd been to my house. He had a telegram for me from my father. It said he would meet me in Ashland the thirteenth instead of that day—the second." She made a slightly longer pause. "I had sixty dollars of Women's Club money in the house. I took fifty of it and went up to Ashland and bought my things."

Judge Peck pressed his right hand against the stump of his left arm as if the maimed member suddenly pained him. The flesh around his eyes puckered, too, as if from pain.

"I see," he murmured.

Staring at him, Bessie went on:

"That sixty dollars had been paid me two days before. I ought to have deposited it in the bank. I knew I ought to deposit it in the bank as soon as it was paid to me. But I didn't. I kept it in the house. I knew my father. I know he might put me off. I can't tell you what I thought, because I can hardly understand it myself now. I had set my heart on the new clothes. I couldn't endure the thought of not having them. I had been married two years then, denying myself, saving all I could. I resented it. I was rebellious against it. I knew I ought to put the money in the bank; but I kept it. I didn't say to myself I'd take it if father put me off. I just tucked it away in my bureau drawer."

HE saw from her eyes, round and blank and staring, that she was hardly aware of him or herself, but was deeply living over that crucial time.

"There was something down in me that knew what I was going to do. But I wouldn't let myself think about it. I just tucked the money away and said to myself, 'No doubt father will keep his word.' Then, when I got his telegram, I hardly hesitated at all. I went to my bureau and got out fifty dollars and put it in my purse. It was more than an hour before train-time. It wasn't done all of a sudden. And I kept saying to myself, 'I mustn't take this money. I have no right to take it for a moment. It isn't mine. It's wicked to take it. How do I know how long it may be before father gets around to give me what he promised? What would Ben say? I shouldn't take it.' I kept saying things like that to myself. And all the time there was something down in me that knew what I was going to do—just as though it laughed at what I was saying to myself.

"Eva Hartley and Sara Giddings and Mrs. Sirrine were in the bus when it came for me. They were on the train with me. And I was talking and laughing with them all the way up to Ashland, just as though nothing had happened."

"Yes," murmured the Judge, looking into his lap and slowly combing down his white mustache with a thumb and bent forefinger.

"I bought my things and came home, and I wasn't really unhappy. I was proud of the suit and hat and shoes and gloves—took pleasure in them. And I lied to Ben—told him a lie about something father had said to me when I hadn't met father at all. It didn't hurt me to lie to him. I was—I don't know how to say it—I was sort of hugging myself and grinning in my heart because I could lie to him and he couldn't find it out—as though that was something to be proud of—Ben!"

Tears again rolled down her cheeks.

"Then I lied to father. I wrote to him I'd borrowed money to buy the things and he must send me the fifty dollars by the thirteenth sure. I was angry with him and abused him for not keeping his word. He didn't send me the money the thirteenth. He put me off again. Then he wrote me he was making a fine deal. A customer of his in Otsego wanted to sell his store building and business and go West. Father had found a purchaser. He was to get seven hundred dollars commission. He said he'd give me two hundred of it and I could get all the clothes I needed for summer and fall and winter. I made myself believe it.

*"'I never sent a man to the penitentiary but some woman sobbed.'"*

"THIS deal of father's strung along. He told me more about it when he was here in June, and wrote me off and on. It was coming along all right, he said, only there were hitches. I made myself believe it. And I took more money. First it was ten dollars for things for the baby. Then it was fifteen dollars for underclothes and stockings for myself. Then it was five dollars. It got to be a hundred dollars. I began to be anxious about it then. Father came here the last week in July. He told me his deal had all fallen through; somebody else had bought the store. He was in debt head over heels—behind with his house and afraid he'd lose his job, had hardly money enough to get out of town.

"Then I opened my eyes. I saw I was in a trap. I lay awake hours thinking about it. It was never out of my mind. What could I do? How was I going to get a hundred dollars? Women are careless enough about business; but they began to talk about investing the money that was in the bank. Of course they'd find me out then; they'd see the money was a hundred dollars short. I was miserable enough. I thought and thought, but I couldn't see any way out.

"IT seemed to me I'd rather die than tell Ben. He'd despise me. He couldn't help it. He'd see I was just my father over again, only worse. He could never trust me again. Ben is so honorable—he'd loved me so much—he's been so good to me. He'd even given up smoking a pipe. He never spends a cent for his own pleasure. It's all for me and the baby. Ben is so good and straight and clean, he couldn't understand. He'd despise me; he couldn't help it.

"I was punished, Judge Peck. I was punished every time Ben looked at me—punished by every sweet, generous thing he did for me and the boy. I was punished to see his shabby clothes and how hard he worked. I wished I was dead sometimes, if only that would wipe out the hundred dollars, so Ben would never know it. You see, I was desperate to find a way out.

"Last Friday I had thirty-three dollars of club money. I took it right over to the bank. Mr. Leffingwell happened to be up at the counter. I've always liked Mr. Leffingwell very much. I've known him all my life, you see; then I worked in the bank for him nearly a year. He was always so nice to me. He was so generous and able. I admired him. I was very fond of him. Ever since I was a small girl I've loved him, if you know how I mean it.

"Well, I went up to the counter with my money and laid it down with my pass book, and began talking and joking with him. You see, when I was in the bank it was a joke that women would never make out their own deposit tickets. So I made him make out my ticket for me, and we laughed about it. He entered the thirty-three dollars in my pass-book, and I went away. Tuesday forenoon I heard about the bank failure and Mr. Leffingwell having run away."

She shook her head at the Judge mournfully.

"You wouldn't think what I did! I was shocked, of course; but all at once it flashed on me that there was my way out. I got my pass-book and made a figure one with the same colored ink in front of the two threes Mr. Leffingwell had put down. You see, that made it look as though I had deposited a hundred and thirty-three dollars. And the deposit ticket in the bank, showing only thirty-three dollars, was in his hand. I could say I had deposited a hundred and thirty-three dollars, and prove it by my pass-book. I said to myself I was safe."

She strove to control herself; but she bowed her face to her hands and spoke between sobs, her shoulders shaking:

"See what an awful thing he did. No one could do a more terrible thing. Aunt Martha Dickinson has taken her life. They say Lon Williams will go to the penitentiary. There's his wife and three little children. Ada Worthington's husband has lost everything—they were saving, too. It's all over town. Almost everybody I know and love is hurt. Ben's lost what we saved. It comes back to me—I did it, too; I did just what Alf Leffingwell did. I'm as bad as he is. Then I lied it off on that poor man, as though he'd deliberately stolen the women's hundred dollars. I can't stand it! People can't do such things. They'll get paid off!"

She sobbed a moment, while the old justice, with bowed head, held the stump of his left arm.

"I came to you, Judge Peck. I must go to somebody. I know you're good and wise. I must find out what to do. I know what to do. I know I should confess it. I ought to tell Ben. But I can't! Ben is so honest—he's so strict about such things. He loathes a thief. He can't help despising it. It would break his heart. I can't endure the thought of his unhappiness. But I will, if you say it's right. I will! Tell me!"

THE Judge got up and paced across the room, rubbing his shiny dome vigorously, leaving her bent over, her face in her hands, awaiting the judgment. He peered out of the window a moment with a puckered face, and came back, standing over her.

"That is the law," he said. "Confess; be punished openly. That is the law. I've watched it thirty years, and the punishment always falls on the innocent as much as on the guilty. I never sent a man to the penitentiary but some woman or child sobbed. What you've told me is how all the crime and sin in the world happen. In all my time on the bench I've known only two really bad persons—a man and a woman. The rest were like you—misled, and listening to the inner voice too late. You can take your crime to Ben, or you can take it into your own heart and pay it off. You can be kind and steadfast and humble. You can spend less than you might and give the rest to a person in need; you can go out of your way to make a sorrowful person smile—saying to yourself, 'I need this for my account with God.' Whatever the law says, you can pay it off. I think you will."

# The Mystery at Woodford's

By WADSWORTH CAMP

*Illustration by Arthur I. Keller*

*"'Tommy!' he shouted. 'Mike! Will somebody ring down?'"*

QUAILE waited only a moment—that brief moment during which the limping steps trailed across the stage and died away. Their cessation cleared his mind for the actual crisis. Wilkins had fallen as Carlton had died—as Woodford had been stricken forty years before. The only variation had been this invasion of the theater by a darkness, thick almost to fluidity. Somewhere in that darkness sat Joyce, who had warned McHugh not to attempt the scene. Beyond him lay Wilkins on the floor of the stage. Quaile had no doubt that he, like the other two, was dead.

The screams of the women in the auditorium were less restrained. The stirrings about him—the rustling of skirts, the undirected stumbling of anxious feet—increased. But at first there was no sound from the stage.

Then, as Quaile started to feel his way down the side, McHugh's voice came hushly out of the darkness:

"Light, here! Mike!"

The old property-man's broken accents followed:

"Mr. McHugh, he's here! His dressing-room! I knew all along—"

A MATCH scraped on the stage. A blazing spot appeared in the center of the pall and appeared to smolder, leaving ragged fringes of darkness. McHugh's face was lighted—a face as grim as it was alarmed; and the black shroud was destroyed a little above the quiet heap that Wilkins made.

Before Quaile could understand, the house was brilliant again. He scrambled across the footlights. McHugh bent over Wilkins, fumbling about his heart. Dolly had sunk in a chair. Her face was hidden by her wrinkled hands. She muttered to herself, shivering, something about a cat. Barbara was braced against the table, staring at Wilkins' motionless figure.

As he ran toward McHugh, Quaile glanced at the auditorium. The rush for the doors had subsided a little. Joyce had climbed to the railing of his box, and, crouching upon it like some strange animal, was about to spring to the stage.

McHugh glanced away from Wilkins. "Ring down!" he cried.

The curtain remained suspended. Quaile guessed that Tommy had fled to the alley. McHugh arose.

"Tommy!" he shouted. "Mike! Will somebody ring down!"

Mike's haggard face appeared at the side. He grasped the cable that controlled the curtain, and began to tug at it with jerky and nearly futile efforts. When it fell at last, the dirty canvas imprisoned them closer with their fear.

Quaile touched McHugh's arm; his question seemed unnecessary:

"He's—dead?"

The tight lips parted:

"Not dead."

A laugh rang out. Its shrill mirth was brutal, nearly blasphemous.

Quaile swung around, revolted. Barbara had not altered her tense and spellbound attitude, but there was no doubt. It was she who had laughed. Her mouth was still open. Her face was without emotion. It was the face of one temporarily stripped of reason. Quaile went to her with a swift concern.

Before he could touch her, before he could speak, a black figure stole from the wings and grasped her arm. Quaile answered to a hot anger against this silent maid, whose features and bearing furnished an impenetrable veil for her thoughts, who glided about her mistress with a stealth almost insolent.

"You will take her to her dressing-room?" Quaile asked.

The woman's mouth moved. He thought it formed the word yes—he couldn't be sure. He watched Barbara follow her across the stage and from his sight with the dumb faith of a little child.

WHEN he turned back, McHugh and Joyce were whispering.

"A doctor!" McHugh cried.

Dolly uncovered her face.

"It isn't too late! Beware the cat—"

"Take hold here, Quaile," McHugh directed. "And, Mike, if you can't find Tommy, go for a doctor yourself—the first one you can nab."

"The police—" Quaile suggested.

"He's alive. We don't want the police."

McHugh stooped and raised Wilkins' feet. Quaile lifted the shoulders. The head rolled from side to side. They carried him to his dressing-room and stretched him on a sofa. Dolly tottered after them and, uninstructed, got water. She placed Wilkins' head in her lap and bathed his temples and cheeks.

"Perhaps he'll pull through," Joyce said from the doorway, "but it's no thanks to you, McHugh. He evidently retained just enough resistance."

A violent controversy reached them from the stage. Quaile recognized Robert Bunce's angry tones above a murmur of protesting voices. McHugh flushed.

"Look out!" Quaile advised. "He's got a strong case against you."

He returned to the stage. The space between the curtain and the walls of the scenery—small at best—was crowded with men and women from the audience whose curiosity had been greater than their fright. Quaile recognized the three men facing Robert as dramatic critics. The great dailies they represented would carry beneath scare-heads to-morrow sensational stories of the rehearsal. He knew that Robert was determined to stop this publicity.

"Don't talk to me about spirits," Quaile heard him cry, in response to a mild inquiry. "McHugh is the only ghost I'm afraid of in this house."

He turned wrathfully on Quaile:

"The pack of you ought to be handled for staging such a scare!"

Quaile shrugged his shoulders.

"Do we look as if we'd had anything to do with it?"

"Where's that mountebank McHugh?" Robert demanded. "At least, he has authority to drive these scandalmongers from the house."

McHugh walked from the wings. His squared jaw foreboded a tempestuous argument, but when he spoke the words reached Quaile with an exceptional mildness:

"I'm no angel, but somebody spoke my name."

Robert strode over to him.

"I shan't retract the mountebank, McHugh. It's as well you heard. Will you kindly clear these newspaper men out of here? Then we'll get down to business."

"Certainly bad business for me to offend the critics," McHugh granted. "I have to pretend to love the vipers. Boys, stay as long as you want—but I know you want to go now. You've got all the dope I'll give anybody. Wilkins is alive, and a doctor's on the way. We have to get quiet."

*Continued on page 16*

This serial began in the issue of May 27.

# Child Champions

BILLY FLYNN of Los Angeles (they christened him William Charles) has quite some local reputation as an all-round athlete. He can lift his own weight, climb an eight-foot pole, right-angle himself from a horizontal bar, and turn hand-springs. Champion Flynn doesn't smoke or chew or swear, and only cries occasionally when his mother wants to put him to bed too early. He attributes his prowess to his daily work in the back yard with the punching bag.

Photograph from International News Service.

INTRODUCING Mr. Cameron Coffey of the Los Angeles Athletic Club. The first time Cameron ever saw a spring board and swimming pool, which was on his second birthday, he dove off the board head first with all his clothes on, and paddled crawling across the plunge. At three and a half he won for his class the world's championship for diving and swimming at the Panama-Pacific Exposition. He does fourteen fancy dives, including one into San Francisco Bay from a height of thirty-two feet, forward, backward, doing the one-and-a-half, and turning a double somersault backward.

Photograph from Bertha H. Smith.

GEORGE WASHINGTON and seven-year-old Ethel Schutt are both noted for crossing the Delaware, but Ethel did it without a boat. From Race Street Wharf to Coopers Wharf, a distance of two and a quarter miles, swam Ethel last August, "just as easy." Ethel learned to swim years ago when she was five. She can do a mile in 50 minutes; she can wiggle 20 yards with hands and feet tied; and, in life-saving exhibitions, she has towed out of danger a man weighing 260 pounds.

DOROTHY KLUMP of Philadelphia, aged six, has enough swimming medals to decorate every one of her dolls. She has held her own against every girl or boy of her age that she has come up against in aquatic stunts, from straight speed tests to fancy diving. In a recent exhibition of form, judges awarded her 25 points out of a possible 30 for the breast, side, overarm, and crawl strokes. She can also swim with hands and feet tied and demonstrate life saving.

Photograph from Bertha H. Smith.

EDITH GRAY used to cry herself to sleep because she was the smallest of her bunch and was always getting left behind. "Pick out one and stay with that one till you run him down," said her father. Edith did so. Then her dad introduced her to his parallel bars and rings. Now Edith can chin herself on the bar 25 times, pull herself up on the rings 5 times and raise a ten-pound dumbbell 30 times. These days it is "the bunch" that is trying to keep up with Edith, for she can run a mile on the level in 6:32; ten miles in 1:24:30; and eighteen miles in 3:15:30.

THE Chicago Humane Society haled little Ruth Parker's dad into court to explain why he tied flatirons on her feet. Whereupon the baby flamingo gravely proceeded to give an exhibition. With two heavy flatirons suspended from each foot she hung by one arm from her father's fingers. Then she hung by the other arm, and lifted the flatirons from the floor with the free hand. Then she made herself into a bridge between two chairs, supported only at her head and feet, and asked her father to place three flatirons on her tummy. "Wonderful development," said the Judge, "case excused."

Photograph from Bertha H. Smith.

TASTES differ. Mr. E. S. Sherwood of Portchester, New York, raised his daughter to be a bowler, and Beatrice, aged six and a half, has not yet been defeated by any woman. She uses a special mineralite ball, weighing eight pounds, and bowls an average score of between 160 and 170. When she gets over the 200 mark, as she frequently does, everybody registers surprise except Mr. Sherwood. He has been Beatrice's trainer since she was four, and he knows his home-made champion.

Photograph from Frank G. Meeks.

# TOM

© Underwood & Underwood.

ONCE upon a time, so the story goes, a man was put to death in Spain for intimating that the Queen of Spain had legs. For centuries it was politely supposed that women somehow floated through space; then we reached the point of gingerly admitting that they had "limbs." Now the fainting lady of Victorian days, the lady who "enjoyed poor health," is in the discard. Instead, we are all for the girl who can walk five miles before breakfast and who, if a burglar breaks into the house, can meet him in the lower hall and take away his watch. Such a young lady is Miss Marion Chapman—and the other young ladies to whom you are about to be introduced. "Ladies, let us present our readers. Readers—ladies."

BUT for the wisdom and gentle guidance of his sister, Lonnie Tucker might have wasted his years going to night school and ended up in a useless job like ours. But the sister, Elizabeth, who is, by the way, his twin, would have none of it. "The hand that rocks its opponent's noodle," she told him, "is the hand that rules the world." So Lonnie entered the ring under the management of Elizabeth, who sits in his corner and calls out sage advice to him about where to "let him have it, Lonnie." And Lonnie has won eighteen of his last twenty-three fights.

Photograph from Hinton Gilman

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NO man has ever crossed the North American continent in an automobile, alone. Anita King, the Paramount girl, accomplished the feat last autumn. It was an ordeal of forty-three days, forty-three nights, and thirteen blowouts. The smiling picture was taken before she started, but when she chugged up Broadway, her face was haggard, her jaw set, there was cup-grease where movie make-up had been, and the dust of eleven States in her clothes.

Photograph by Wilmot

SEE this crowd of brave Russian soldiers? Notice the one with the bandage on his head, on the left. Well, she isn't a he; he's a her. She's Colonel Margarita Romanovna Kalantsova. At seventeen she discarded skirts for trousers and when the war broke out she joined the army, not by feminine appeal, but by the simpler expedient of shaving her head. Not until she was taken to a hospital, wounded, did she reveal her sex. Then as a reward for her bravery she was made a Colonel and given command of a regiment of her own beloved Cossacks. Better give up, Wilhelm; the suffragettes are after you.

© Underwood & Underwood.

HOW to enter a room gracefully is taught at our best finishing schools. Why not a course in how to fall off your horse gracefully? Retort courteous: it can't be done. This is the one awkward situation that a society girl cannot cope with. The picture is of Miss Rena Maitland—a little warm, but not at all astonished. She was riding one day in the Horse Show at Pinehurst, North Carolina, when her mount "Hato" reared and Miss Maitland took this position simultaneously with the click of the camera. No one was hurt. The photographer was a little frightened when he sold the picture. But let us work on the theory that a good rider is made by a fall. Miss Maitland is now a good rider.

# OYS

© Underwood & Underwood.

AND they say that women are knock-kneed except when painstakingly called for a Broadway chorus! Let them look at Anna Schaffer and forever hold their tongues. For her the Primrose Path leads from third base to home plate, and the only applause she cares about is a cheering "Anahoy!" Last spring at Ebbets Oval, New York, in a game between two feminine baseball teams, Anna Schaffer was dubbed the Hans Wagner of the "Blues." After seeing his picture we prefer to call Hans the Anna A. Schaffer of the Pirates. Though she aëroplaned for the ball and reached a long way into the sun region, she "muffed." Well, so does Christy Mathewson—sometimes.

LAST year this member of the stronger sect was arguing that women shouldn't have the vote. "Because," he said, "they aren't strong enough to serve in the army or on the police force." Foolish bachelor: why not come around and talk to a few of us old suffragettes before starting things up with statements like that? In England now there are more than 100 women constables who have taken the places of "bobbies" gone to the front. If it be objected that the lady on the left can't be a real cop because she lacks the square-toed gun-boat shoes, we answer that her pair was ordered but hasn't been delivered yet.

Photograph by Dupont Brothers.

CICELY FOUND is an instructor in the Japanese Jiu Jitsu School, Oxford Street, London, where she conducts a course known as "The Art of Self Defense for Ladies." Born in Japan, with a pair of jujitsu steel wrists, slim little Miss Cicely startled such some of the greatest Japanese wrestlers. Now that she is all of thirteen she has to look high and low for opportunities to defend herself, especially since a public exhibition in London not long ago. There she astounded spectators by handling one 300-pound Sergeant Rosman like a feather weight.

CHARLOTTE, the Hippodrome Ice Queen, spent the first nine years of her life as a prim little German girl, whose only violent exercises were on the piano. She was an infant prodigy, in fact—that such a tiny prodigy that her mother and the doctor decided she should skate out of doors for several hours every day. Now Charlotte is ruddy and muscular with a clear eye and a white smile. The nonchalant attitude in the picture has become as natural to her as saying "Guten Morgen." Besides all that, the Crown Prince skates with her when she is in Berlin. She has steadied Royalty when its ankles wobbled.

© Underwood & Underwood.

THIS is a Long Beach cow-boy taking a 5.50 a. m. look at a medicine ball. It's strange to think, though not at all improbable, that some day a family clustered around the album will say "That's Grandma as a girl. Funny cumbersome, old-fashioned bathing suit, isn't it? Turn over."

This young lady goes for a kick and a run and a swim on Long Beach almost every day of the year. Yes, in winter. One winter day she invited a young man to go in swimming with her.

"Have a heart."

"I have," responded my lady fair. "An excellent one. Otherwise I should have been dead a year ago."

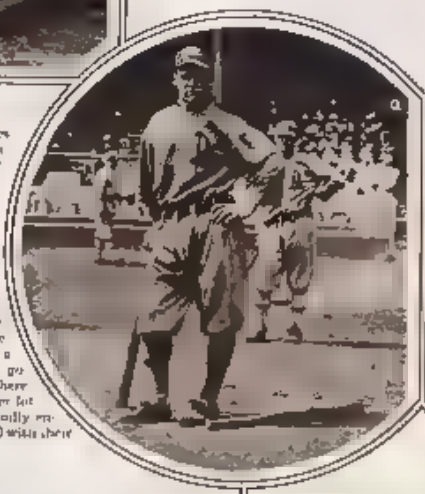
# There's a Price on These Men

*Photographs by Brown Brothers*

IN answer to your question, Louise, we will say that if you have tried all other methods to get a man, without result, the best thing we can suggest is that you save your pennies and buy one. These baseball players all have a price in their heads. Take James L. Vaughn, for instance: here shown in all his manly pulchritude. James is a south-paw pitcher, meaning a left-hander sometimes called a side wheeler. But you wouldn't mind his eating his pie with his left hand, when you remember that any time you got tired of him you could take him out and sell him for $10,000.

SAD, sad is the story of Babe Adams, but he bears up cheerfully under the strain of it. In 1909 he won the World's Championship for Pittsburgh. It would have taken $25,000 Louise, to buy him then—probably more than your father would feel like paying, even though your millinery bills are something terrible. But in seven years his stock has behaved very, very badly; a mere trifle of $5,000 would probably purchase him now. "Babe" is just a shade under six feet in height and weighs 185 pounds; warranted very useful and handy in hanging curtains or shaking the chandeliers.

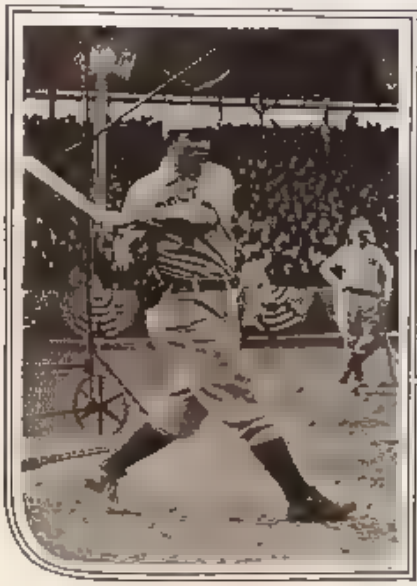
WHETHER a catcher makes a better husband than a pitcher has long been a matter of dispute. "Pitcher" has a sort of household sound, to be sure; but on the other hand, the catcher is used to having foul balls smash against his mask and the blows of marriage seldom jar him. Walter H. Schang, one of Connie Mack's young stars showed such brilliant work in the World's Series against the Giants in 1913 that it will be a long time before he has to go back to Wales, New York, where he used to play, to be corner for. Ladies bidding for him will kindly enclose certified check for $15,000 with their letters.



HERE'S a real bargain for you, Louise—with a college education thrown in. Edward L. Grant left Franklin, Massachusetts, for Harvard, and Harvard for baseball with the Philadelphia National team. Five years with Cincinnati and the New York Giants followed, adding to his reputation, but not boosting his price one bit. As he stands now an easy running, six-cylinder, fully equipped 1913 model, you might be able to lure him away from McGraw for $2,000 or a little more.

ALONG with Caruso and Mrs. Castle and Charles M. Schwab, you've got to rank Tris Speaker as a wage earner. Tris was playing in some out-of-the-way league down South when a scout for the Boston Americans discovered him and caught him from the unwitting small town hitch for a bag of peanuts and fifty dollars in Confederate bills. Early this season he was sold to Cleveland for $26,000, and expects the team to be a pennant winner. Leave $35,000 in a tin can under the old willow tree if you want Tris, Louise—no use trying to cast down the price on him.

VICTOR SAIER went from his home town, Lansing, Michigan, where he used to bat 'em out over the alley fence, to the Chicago Cubs, and has held down the first sack there ever since. A lanky, agile young man almost six feet in height, he possesses a marvelous reach that ought to be very helpful in cruising the roses over the front porch. He was bought for a song by the Cubs. By the way, what sort of a song is it that people buy things with? We have tried singing all kinds, but were never able to pass our sweet notes in lieu of currency. However Victor has made so good in Chicago that it would take about $10,000 to get him now.



HE may be a trifle bow-legged, and he may look funny as he wrestles around the bases, but, Louise, you can't buy Hans Wagner for a penny under $5,000. Forty-two is old age for the baseball game, but the fans who have cheered Hans for years claim that he is right in his prime. Our hats are off to Hans and Old Cy Young and Old Christy Mathewson (he must be every bit of thirty-seven), and all the other grand old fellows who have proved that by clean living and hard work they can "come back" year after year.

# Reporting Blank on Rupert

By SEWELL FORD

*Illustrations by Frank Snapp*

AND yet, I've had people ask me if this private sec job didn't get sort of monotonous! Dook it! Say, even a while!

I was [illegible] the arcade here [illegible] when I [illegible] Dutch Schultz, which is one [illegible] from [illegible] marble mill table a [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] girl's [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

sharp and snappy. "Through the private entrance! Understand?"

I nods and makes a dive into an upbound car that's just makin' a stop at Seventeenth. "Hey Jimmy reverse her! I'll square you with the starter. That's it. Shoot us down."

So, when Rupert steps out on the ground floor, I'm there to take him by the arm and lead him back into the elevator.

"Why—why what's the matter now?" he asks.

"Couldn't say," says I. "Only you're wanted again. It's the Big Boss this time—Old Hickory Ellins himself. And of course you hop to the Cap'n if an assistant floor walker tells you to jump. But if you're perishin' don't say I didn't warn you."

"But it's all true—every word of it," insists Rupert.

"Ev'ry word," says I. "I wouldn't chance it on with Old Hickory. He's a hard-headed old pirate, and that romance dope is likely to make him froth at the mouth. If he starts in givin' you the third degree, or anything like that, you'd better close up like a clam. Here we are, and for the love of Pete draw it mild."

You see, I hadn't minded passin' out a freak to Mr. Robert, for he often gets a laugh out of 'em. But Mr. Ellins is different. The size of his bump of humor is a dimple at the base of his skull, and if he traces up the fact that I'm the one who turned Rupert and his pirate yarn loose in the general offices my stand is as it descriminatin private see is goin' to get a sad jolt.

So when Cap'n Killam has been up on the carpet near an hour, with no signs of his either livin' been let out or fired through a window, I begins to get nervous. Once Mr. Robert starts to go into Old Hickory's sanctum, but he finds the door locked, and shortly after that he shuts his roll-top and leaves for the day.

IT'S near closin' time when Old Hickory opens the door an inch or two, throws a snoopy glance around, and beckons me mysterious to come in. Rupert is still there and still alive. In fact he's stickin over one of Mr. Ellins' fat black cigars, but otherwise lookin' fairly satisfied with himself.

"Young man," says Old Hickory, "I understand that you have heard some of Captain Killam's story."

"Eh?" says I, careless like. "Oh, yes. I believe he did feed a little of that tale to me, but—"

"You will kindly forget to mention it about the office," he cuts in.

"Yes, sir," says I. "That'll be the easiest thing I do. At the time it sounded mighty—"

"Never mind how it sounded to you," says he. "Your entertainment is now ended. Make double sure it is properly shut off. Well, no need for me to say that either. What I want you to do is to take Captain Killam to some quiet restaurant on Tillington Row, reasonable and select, and engage a comfortable room for him to rest and wash perhaps."

"Yes, sir," I gasps as in the morning. He goes on, "you will call for Captain Killam at ten o'clock. If he has with him at that time certain old pieces of silver jewelry, on which my expert over the phone to me says I will tell you what to do next."

I expect I was gawpin' some and starin' from one to the other of 'em, for Mr. Ellins scowls more fierce than ever.

"Well?" he growls.

"I was just letting it sink in, sir," says I.

"Humph!" he snorts. "If it will help the process any I may say that I am considering the possibility of going on a cruise South with Captain Killam for my health."

At which Old Hickory drops his left eyelid and indulges in what passes with him for a chuckle.

That's my cue to grin knowin' after which I gets my hat and starts off with Rupert. We'd only got into the corridor when Old Hickory calls me back, wavin' a key.

"Pay for two days in advance," says he, and then adds in a whisper: "Keep close track of him. See that no one gets away or talk too much."

"Yes, sir," says I. "Gag and hold, if necessary."

But here don't seem to be much need of even warnin' Rupert. He hardly opens his mouth on the way up in the hotel, but trails along silent, his eyes fixed starey, like he was in a deep.

"Well," says I after a bell-hop had shown us into one of the Tillington's air-shaft rooms and gone for ice cents worth of ice water, "it looks like you had the Big Boss almost enthused with that pirate tale of yours."

Rupert don't enthuse much at that.

"As a cautious business man," says he, "I suppose Mr. Ellins is quite right in moving slowly. He wants to see the jewelry, and he wishes time to investigate. Still, it seems to me that my story ought to speak for itself."

"That is the pub," says I. "Stick to that. But I wouldn't chatter about it to strangers."

Rupert smiles indulgent.

"Thank you," says he. "You need not fear. I have kept my secret for three years, and I still hold it."

*Jose Gaspar was a real person —real as John Paul Jones."*

HE'S a dramatic cuss, Rupert. I leaves him postin' in front of the mirror on the bath-room door, gazin' sort of romantic at himself.

"Not a common, every-day nut as I explains to Vee that night when I goes up for my reglar Wednesday evenin' call, "but a nut all the same. Sort of a parlor pirate, see?"

"And you think there isn't any buried treasure, after all?" asks Vee.

"Don't it sound simple?" I demands.

"I'm not so sure," says Vee, shakin' her head. "There were pirates on the Florida coast, you know. I've read about them. And—and just since Forsby! If his story were really true—"

"Who was the name of that scissors again?" puts in Auntie.

"Jose Gaspar," I laugh. "He was a pirate hero of a different sort from Vee's romantic ideal of a buccaneer. So it never does change much with our talk. And I judged she was too busy with her sweater-knittin' to hear a word. But here he is, askin' details.

"Why," says I, "Captain Killam says it was Seven Keys."

"What an odd name!" says Auntie. "And you left him at some hotel, did you? The—"

"Pinellas," says I.

"Oh, yes," says Auntie, and resumes her knittin' placid.

Course, there I was, gassin away merry about what Old Hickory wanted kept a total secret. But I usually do tell things to Vee. She was one of the few I do. Auntie don't go for such. Besides, who—I think if an old gent has been over-interested in such wood-hauling stuff? How English.

So I wasn't worryin' any that night, and at quarter of nine next morning I shows up at the hotel to send up a call for Rupert.

"Captain Killam?" says the room clerk with the plastered front hair. "Why, he left an hour or more ago."

"Yes, I know," says I; "but he was coming back."

"No, sir," says the clerk; "he said he wasn't. Took his bag, too."

"Wha-a-at!" I gasps. "He—he left gone for good, has he?"

"So it seems," says the clerk, and stiffens up, continues his chat with the same bored air as before, explains that—

"—he was in for an early start, bound?" What was the idea, anyway? Rupert had found a prospective backer, hadn't he? And was he—been over-cautious? What more could he ask? Unless some one else had got next to him and who could have heart of this.

"Gee!" I groans. "I wonder?"

I COULDN'T stand there starin' fool across the register and do the wonderin' all day, though. Besides, I wanted to follow a clue. It ain't a very likely one, but it's better'n nothing. So I piles out and boards a Columbus Avenue surface car and fiddle of twenty minutes I'm at Auntie's apartments, interviewin' Hilda, her original bonehead maid.

No, Miss Verona wasn't at home. She'd gone for her morning ride in the park. Also Auntie was out.

"So early as this?" says I. "Where do Auntie go?—away?"

"Before breakfast, yah," says Hilda. "She telephone long time, then a great many cooms, and she go out."

"Not a gent with pale hair and pleasant of feature in his face?" I asks.

Hilda gazes loughless at the ceiling a minute.

"Yah," says she. "Den have funny face, mit red nose?"

"The same by and by," says I. "Could she have pulled anything like that? Here, hamme stop in and leave note for Miss Vee. I want her to call me up when she comes in. No, I'll dash off right here on the lib'ry table. Here's a pad and—"

I broke off there, because my mind was open too wide for further remarks. On the table was a big atlas opened to the map of Florida. And on the margin, with a line drawn from about the middle of the west coast, was something written in faint in pencil.

"Dead Seens Key," I reads. "Gee-gad!" Auntie's got the bug—and Rupert.

"Vass—vass?" asks Hilda.

"Nothin' interesting, that's what I says," says I. "I've had a nice long nap at the switch, and I've just woke up in time to see the rear ends crash on towards the open draw. Ha-hup! Ha-hup!" I says. "I'll never be the same again."

"Is too bad, yah," says Hilda sympathetic.

"That don't half describe it," says I. "And what's goin' to happen when I report to Old Hickory won't be nice for print in the papers."

"Should I say something by Miss Vee when she comm?" asks Hilda.

"Yes," says I. "Tell her to kindly order flowers."

And with that I starts draggy toward the elevator.

Oh, no! Private seeing ain't always what you might call a slumber part.


# A Call for Nominations

MUST a man move to New York or Chicago or some other big city in order to make a really big success of his life? Is Opportunity in this country concentrated in a few great centers? Is there no chance for the man in the country town—using the term in its broad sense, to include cities of 25,000 or more? I believe there is. I want to prove it. I am going to publish four articles, telling the story of

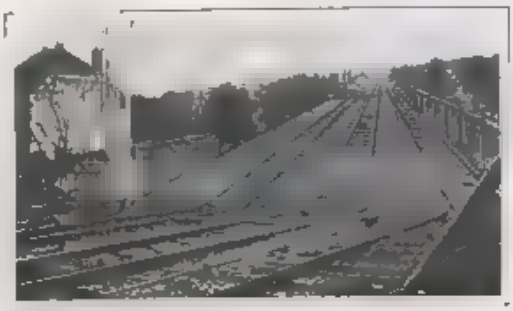
*A Country Banker* *A Country Storekeeper*
*A Country Preacher* *A Country Doctor*

The articles will be written by Forrest Crissey, one of the best known special article writers in America. *You* will select the subjects for these articles. *You* will tell me who is the country banker, the country storekeeper, the country preacher, and the country doctor who have made the largest success of their lives—who, living in a small world, have nevertheless done big things. Write me, in not more than 500 words, naming your candidate for this series of articles, and telling why he belongs. Who is the best country banker, the best country storekeeper, the best country preacher, the best country doctor in America—and why?

Address your letters to me at 95 Madison Avenue, New York.

*BRUCE BARTON Editor.*

# Tricks of the Trade—Somewhere in France



# Taking Chances With the Weather

By JOHN MOSHER

THE United States spends about $1,000,000 a year to know whether it is going to rain, snow, hail or be fair and warmer to-morrow. Weather bureaus all over the country send out a million forecasts by telephone and a million more by mail. In New York City, when a violent atmospheric change is foreseen, three men are kept at the observatory day and night straight, warning ferryboats, ocean steamships, coast-to-coast trains, and manufacturing plants, while a heavy snow means a job for 20,000 men. In the West many of the big ranches have their own wireless plants, to pick up weather forecasts sent through the air from one government bureau to another. We have learned by experience that we can not afford to take chances with the weather.

## The Blizzard of '88

CERTAINLY nowadays no such experiences could occur as did when the blizzard of 1888 swept over the country. Ranchmen would now prepare for such a storm, and would never for instance have allowed the thirteen children to go to the little schoolhouse in Dakota where they would all have perished had it not been for the courage of the teacher, as you will see by her years.

During the two years in her career in county school-teacher she had come to think of herself as the children would have perished. A strong man alone might have perished. He and Miss Loper kept the children together, keeping the youngsters warm, two sense way of her got them to reach a house half away all of them without. They reached safety in half hour on that big after seven hours following in the storm.

Charles Stuart Moody nearly lost his life in a storm of the very opposite sort from one that Miss Loper had to face. He was sent from Rapid City, South Dakota, to Washington to look after a herd of horses at Cheyenne Springs. He nearly lost his life while waiting for a protected horseman, but luckily was not that the cattle came off the hills to the springs refusing to feed and the slightest necessity because to effort.

After covering about half the distance, Moody had halted for lunch in a ravine, when he noticed that the intense white glare in which he had been riding had changed to a gray haze. A vulture overhead suddenly whooped wildly toward earth. Hundreds of jackrabbits and coyotes [illegible] Ahead of him [illegible] suits of dust would suddenly spin [illegible] the air and then suddenly disappear.

He joined together. Then a third and a fourth. Suddenly hundreds seemed to [illegible] a common center and a column to the sky, leaving the earth swept clean as a floor.

Moody had just time to throw himself on the ground as the dust storm swept over him. When he rose it had become dark as night, and he had to lead his horse by the bridle. For three days he wandered with his horse in this fashion, sometimes riding, but for the most part footing it. They had no water.

An old ruined shanty which they came upon the second day, shielded them from the stinging sand, but their lack of water [illegible] on into the gale again. About [illegible] afternoon they found a spring. Moody rolled off his horse, and moistened his lips and tongue—he could not swallow. The horse plunged in up to his thighs and drained his fill, then fell over dead.

Photograph by [illegible]

*A storm like this can tear up an orchard; it can lift a house a hundred feet and carry people for a quarter of a mile*

That night his thirst was relieved. Moody suffered [illegible] terribly from fatigue. The whole night he fought off [illegible] coyotes from [illegible] horse's carcass. All day [illegible] with a fire and cooked some of the flesh. All day he fought off the vultures with a rock. Not [illegible] the third day of this was he rescued.

The most spectacular kind of storm, of course, is the tornado. A tornado in Kirksville, Missouri, in 1899, [illegible] an orchard and carried it four or five hundred yards, at [illegible] a house nearly a hundred feet, and swept the three persons in it through the air a quarter of a mile, setting them down again practically uninjured.

"I was conscious at the time I was flying," said Miss Moorehouse, one of this trio. "It seemed a long time. As I was going through the air I saw a horse rolling about. He was a white horse with a harness on. It kicked and struggled."

## A Terrible Hail-Storm

THE worst experience Mr. Brown of the New York Museum of Natural History ever had—and his search for fossils has almost cost him his life several times—was in a Western hail-storm. One fine June day he had climbed three hundred feet up a steep precipice [illegible] but he could not [illegible] for better weather, which [illegible] on his researches. Suddenly, without more warning than the swift darkening of the sky, a storm of hail swept down upon him, the stones as large as agates. In order to hold on with both hands to the surface of the cliff, he used his specimen knapsack over his head. It thus served as a shield from the hail. The insignificant foothold he had was of clay, which at once became so slippery that he was practically hanging by his hands. Then, as the hail increased, it stabbed his hands raw. Fortunately it lasted only five minutes—but it was followed by a violent spurt of rain, which made the clay cliff as slippery as a sheet of ice. Mr. Brown was once shipwrecked. He did not know how to swim, and he had nothing but a plank to cling to—but that shrank with his torn hands down the three hundred foot cliff of wet clay remains in his memory quite as vividly.

Though most of the violent storms occur on the West some like the blizzard of 1888, which caught the school-teacher in that prairie school, do occasionally overwhelm Eastern cities. Roscoe Conkling of New York City probably owed his death to that blizzard.

"There wasn't a cab or a carriage of any kind to be had," he wrote of it a few days after. "Once during the day I had determined an offer to ride uptown in a carriage, because the man wanted fifty dollars. I started to walk up Broadway from Wall Street. I was exhausted when I got to Union Square, and, wiping the snow from my eyes, tried to make out the angles there. There was no light, and I plunged right on in as straight a line as I could determine. In the middle of the park I was up to my arms in a drift. I pulled the ice and snow from my eyes, and held up my hands till the snow melted and I could see. But it was too dark and the snow too blinding. For nearly twenty minutes I stuck there, but somehow I got out and made my way along. When I reached the New York Club at Twenty-fifth Street it had taken me three hours to come from Wall Street."

Conkling died a month later, of pneumonia.

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# The Mystery at Woodford's

*Continued from page 8*

The critics consulted. They agreed to retreat to the lobby in return for McHugh's promise to send them the result of the doctor's diagnosis. McHugh accused Mike sufficiently to clear the stage of all those who had no business there. Then he turned to Robert, who accepted the challenge of his glance.

"Now you'll listen, McHugh. There's no question in my mind that your actor aped the manner of Woodford's death and of Carlton's accident. It's a good story—the best of the lot; but it's brought us to the parting of the ways."

McHugh had resumed a long-abused cigar.

"What you mean—the parting of the ways?"

"I mean that you're an ideal showman. Perhaps Carlton died a natural death. That may have suggested the way to fill your pockets. I charge you with my brother's scare this afternoon. You and Mr. Quaile and Watson were alone in the house with him, and a servant's pain is easily greased. I charge you with arranging this business to-night for the benefit of your audience. But you've forgotten there's an undesirable-tenancy clause in your lease, and Josiah and I have warned you. You'll be off our property to-morrow morning."

McHugh snatched a folded paper from his pocket and shook it in Robert's face.

"I've read this lease a good many times," he snarled, "and I went over it again with my lawyer this afternoon. You get an injunction, and I'll get an order vacating it in half an hour. By the time you've proved the nature of my tenancy the show will have gray whiskers, and then you'll find it's clean as soap."

"He's quite right, Mr. Bunce," Quaile said. "McHugh, why don't you let him glimpse at Wilkins?"

"What's the use?" McHugh sneered. "He's too practical."

Robert looked at him closely.

"If you're so sincere in your innocence, why hesitate to let me examine the actor?"

McHugh turned and stalked toward Wilkins' dressing-room.

"You're on. Come see for yourself."

THEY filed through the doorway. Dolly still bathed the actor's head. Joyce leaned against the table.

Quaile saw Robert's expression change as he took in this picture.

He tiptoed to the sofa, and placed his hand on Wilkins' forehead. In response to the contact, the actor's head swayed with a comatose helplessness. Robert glanced up.

"Good heavens!" he breathed. "There's no sham here."

For the first time he appeared to see Joyce.

"What does he say? He's a doctor?"

McHugh shook his head. He explained who Joyce was and why he was in the theater. Robert straightened. He approached Joyce and stared at him curiously.

"You don't ask us to take this seriously as—as supernormal?"

"Somebody must," Joyce answered. "I warned Mr. McHugh, and he refused to listen to me. The result is before you."

Robert turned to McHugh. The uncertainty of his manner increased.

"Mr. McHugh, I regret my temper a moment ago. I don't pretend to understand, but surely you're not to blame."

"Thanks," McHugh replied. "I tried to tell you I was honest this morning."

Joyce spoke earnestly:

"Don't add to his stubbornness, Mr. Bunce. I have studied this house. I have opened my mind to its atmosphere. I tell you unreservedly that the building harbors an evil force beyond human control."

McHugh's voice vibrated with a repressed fury:

"I'll show you what stubbornness is. If Wilkins is able to go on I'll bring the show off to-morrow night, as I said I would."

A brisk knock shook the panels of the door. Dolly looked up from her task of bathing Wilkins' temples. McHugh opened the door for a tall man in overcoat clothes. He had a forceful, intelligent face.

"Is this Mr. McHugh?" he asked.

The manager nodded.

"What's happened here?" the man went on. "The place is full of hysterics. Nobody outside will tell me anything rational. That man has been hurt?"

"See for yourself?" McHugh asked. "It's your opinion I'm after, not mine."

The doctor advanced to Wilkins, stooped above him, drew back one of the tight eyelids, took the pulse.

"Complete coma," he said in a puzzled voice. "I shall make a more thorough examination, and I must ask some questions. This lady—will she remain and help me? Can she answer—"

"Sure," McHugh broke in. "She can answer all sorts of questions—maybe more than you'll want to ask. You're kicking us out, eh?"

"There are too many in this small room," the doctor said.

"Never mind. We'll wait for the word near by. Come on, boys."

HE led Joyce, Robert, and Quaile from the room, and closed the door. He brought a chair and stationed himself just outside. Joyce and Robert stood close to him, discussing the mystery in undertones. Quaile stepped to the stage and called to Tommy.

"Miss Morgan," he said, "was moved upstairs before the rehearsal. Which is her dressing-room?"

"One flight up to the right," Tommy answered, "but she ain't there. Mr. Quaile, has the doctor said anything yet?"

"She's not there!" Quaile echoed. "Surely she hasn't had time to change."

"Didn't change," Tommy said. "Took it on the run with a long black cloak over her costume. Her maid chased after her, carrying a bag and a bundle. How is Mr. Wilkins? The doctor—"

But Quaile had turned away. Barbara had left, and her bearing had been that of flight. She had taken everything with her. It fixed her intention of not returning. Quaile walked back to the three men outside the actor's door. He paced up and down the wings, out of ear-shot, until the door opened.

The doctor's expression was perplexed. Quaile went nearer in time to hear McHugh's gruff inquiry:

"What's the answer?"

"He's coming out of it. It's almost like a trance. He has practically no symptoms, no recollection. That old woman in there—she's superstitious, if anything."

McHugh grunted.

"Can't diagnose it, eh?"

The doctor glanced around uneasily.

"Not yet. I'd like to watch the case for a day or two."

"I want to know, doc, if I can get the man to my automobile and home."

The physician ran his fingers through his hair.

"I should say you could, and that's another thing that floors me. I've given him a restorative, and he's sitting up. He's more than dazed."

"Then let's take him," McHugh snapped. "It isn't healthy for him here."

The doctor admitted them. Wilkins sat on the sofa, his head buried in his hands. Dolly stood opposite. McHugh entered and threw the actor's coat over his costume and placed his hat on his head. Wilkins didn't stir.

"How you feel?" McHugh asked.

Wilkins' voice was muffled and husky from behind his hands:

"I don't know. I—I feel sick."

But when the doctor and McHugh lifted him he scarcely swayed. With a lifeless motion he lowered his hands. From out the chalky pallor of his face, lobelide eyes gleamed.

"Why do you stare at me?" he cried, with a childish petulance. "Can't

you leave me alone? Oh, my God!"

McHugh warned the others to silence. With the doctor's help, he led Wilkins out of the room, across the stage, and down the alley.

Quaile walked home alone, feeling himself pointedly excluded by McHugh; but when he arrived at his apartment, the manager and the doctor sat in his study. As he entered McHugh put his finger to his lips.

"Wilkins?" Quaile asked.

"Doc here's given him some dope. Not likely to wake before morning, is he, doc?"

"Certainly he ought not to," the doctor said.

McHugh glanced at Quaile.

"Then leave him in peace until I get here to-morrow. No use threshing over these things. I want his mind fresh for me."

With an effort Quaile choked his exasperation.

"You'll try to urge him on?"

"As hard as money'll talk."

"I shouldn't care to try it," the doctor said. "A strange case from every angle. If physical means were responsible, I should look for more physical reaction."

McHugh jumped up.

"We're taking possession of Quaile's hearth and fireside. I've more to do to-morrow than I like to think about. Got to have some sleep; so, if I'm going to take you home first, we'd better get a move on."

NOR would McHugh yield an inch when he arrived at the apartment next morning. He was clothed with an unaccustomed and startling precision. His necktie was new, colorful. A white carnation—hitherto unheard-of decoration for him—snuggled in his buttonhole. Yet Quaile's interest was captured by the flushed cheeks, the eyes, sparkling and purposeful.

"I shall suspect you of magic, McHugh! You don't mean to say you've persuaded Wilkins?"

"Sure thing."

"Then you've told him," Quaile said, "more than you're willing to admit to me, or else the man's courage is unhuman."

McHugh grinned. He fondled his boutonnière.

"You're too suspicious, Quaile."

"I'm not blind. You must have given positive assurances that he'd be safe to-night."

"On my oath, I did nothing of the kind—because I couldn't. He runs his chances, as he did last night."

"In that case," Quaile took him up, "maybe you'll tell me what makes you so cheerful?"

"Wouldn't believe me, but I'll give myself away that far."

McHugh bent closer. The satisfaction in his eyes was real.

"It's because I've every reason to feel that to-night's the turning-point. After the performance I guess I'll be able to say for sure whether what's happened is due to Woodford's ghost or flesh and blood. Say, Quaile, after all the uncertainty we've suffered down there, isn't that enough to make a man cheerful?"

Quaile wasn't satisfied.

"May I ask if you're certain the rest of the company will stick?"

"Heard from 'em all—except Barbara."

Quaile knew that he flushed.

"What about her, McHugh?"

The manager backed out of the room.

"I got to hustle. No time to gossip about her or anybody now. Lots of important people to see this morning. Why else you suppose I dolled myself up this way? Say, keep off Wilkins on the subject of the theater; I've forbidden him to mention it."

"I promise not to pump him, if that's what you mean."

McHugh had gone. The barrier remained as forbidding as ever.

When, later, Quaile knocked at Wilkins' door, the response was sleepy and grudging.

"How do you feel?" Quaile asked, going in. "Anything I can do?"

Wilkins' reply was ungracious:

"Nothing but let me sleep. I feel like the devil."

So Quaile closed the door. With nothing else to do, he shut himself in the study and called up Barbara's apartment. The voice that replied was not hers.

"It is very important I should speak to Miss Morgan. Will you ask her?"

"Miss Morgan hasn't risen," a lifeless voice came back. "It is useless to call up again. She will see or speak to no one to-day."

"Is she ill?"

"I think not."

"She will be at the theater to-night?"

It was maddening. The woman's tone did not vary; it expressed no interest.

"I wouldn't venture to say."

The breaking of the connection suggested a studied impertinence.

His fear for Barbara increased. Just one thing was left that he could do in her behalf. He would find out if she had been discovered at the Bunces'.

WATSON'S greeting was friendly—as of one companion in arms to another.

"It's Mr. Quaile!" he called, and he pointed in the direction of the library.

"Go right on back if you want to speak to Mr. Josiah."

But Josiah, it was evident, did not share Watson's feeling of comradeship.

"What do you want, Mr. Quaile?" he asked. "People are making too free with my house."

"No more footsteps, I hope," Quaile said.

Josiah's distrust was tinged with curiosity.

"You didn't come here to ask that. But I haven't heard any, since you're so anxious. I've read the papers, and Robert tells me you and Mr. McHugh are right. I'll have to get rid of that place. Well, what do you want? When people come to see me to ask after my comfort, they usually want to borrow money. They don't get it."

Quaile managed a smile.

"I was passing by. I really wanted to know how you were after your scare."

It was many minutes before he found the courage to hint at the questions that had brought him, and then they drew no valuable replies. He gathered only that Josiah had no idea of the girl's invasion of his house. He had never met Barbara Morgan. He had never seen her—never heard of her before this revival.

As Quaile was going, Josiah called him back and spoke with a halting restraint:

"So McHugh's going to try to give that performance to-night, after all?"

Quaile marveled at the old man's swift transformation. There was a movement, hinting at slyness, about the corners of his mouth. It gave to the next words an added importance:

"I'd like to see what happens to Mr. McHugh."

Quaile left, took the subway to Wall Street, and sought Robert in his luxurious office. But the younger Bunce had little more to offer than his brother.

"I've seen Miss Morgan on the stage," he answered, "and I've heard of her, of course, as an exceptional young actress."

He returned to his rooms, where Wilkins still rested. When the actor appeared, Quaile had no difficulty in following McHugh's wishes. Wilkins was uncommunicative, bristling with guarded information; yet his bearing suggested that that knowledge was not wholly comforting.

SO much had intervened since Dolly's fright over the telephone that Quaile had nearly forgotten those wayward warnings. He knew that the actor was in the study when the attenuated and remote bell sound took him off his guard. He ran in, anxious to spare Wilkins; but he was too late. Wilkins already had the receiver at his ear, had started back.

"Drop it!" Quaile commanded. "You mustn't listen."

He snatched the receiver from Wilkins' hand and replaced it.

"So that's it!" the actor breathed. "That's what happened the other night!"

Quaile's suspense grasped him. He cursed this evil chance at the last moment.

"Woodford!" Wilkins went on. "That queer ringing! That unnatural voice!"

Quaile spread his hands.

"What did you hear?"

"A straight warning," Wilkins answered—"an unqualified threat of death if I tried it again."

"Magic!" Quaile muttered. "McHugh isn't clever enough—"

Wilkins grasped at the name.

"I must get to him with this. Finish dressing. Let's hurry to the theater."

And, all the way down, he gave himself more and more thoroughly to a morrisse indecision.

Wilkins went to the stage entrance, while Quaile elbowed his way into the lobby. Although it was early, the crowd there was thick and restless. A cardboard sign above the box-office window informed those without tickets that the house was sold out.

As the doorman let him in, ticket-holders pressed forward with a fanatical eagerness. Quaile hastened to the stage, where he found McHugh alone. The manager was in evening clothes. He chewed with an unusual absorption at his cold cigar. He answered Quaile's inquiry as to Wilkins with an absent-minded air:

"I've talked to him, and he's dressing."

"I wish I knew your power over him."

McHugh studied his cigar.

"I wish," he answered, "it didn't make me feel like a criminal to use my power."

Quaile saw that the former detective was less sure of himself than he had been the night before.

"The rest of the company?" he asked.

"All here," McHugh answered, "putting on the frills and paint."

Quaile experienced a vast relief. Then Barbara was not ill.

McHugh had moved to the spot where Carlton and Wilkins had fallen after the manner of Woodford. He glanced at the single border, which was all that burned at this early hour. Quaile wondered what he had in his mind. Then the manager walked to the wings, and returned immediately with the candlestick that Carlton had held at the moment of his death—that Wilkins had grasped before his fall last night.

"Perfectly good candle in it," McHugh mused, "and it's a waste of my good money, because it doesn't once get lighted during the whole play. Put a little fire to it, Quaile."

Quaile obeyed, puzzled.

"What do you want of it, McHugh?"

"Hold it up, so," McHugh directed, when the wick was blazing. "And don't do anything else until I pass the word."

"What's your idea?"

BUT McHugh left the stage without answering, so Quaile stood as he was, holding the candle aloft while he tried to sound McHugh's purpose.

Tommy entered from the wings.

"Better smother the light, Mr. Quaile," the assistant advised. "There's a fireman outside, and the laws are strict."

McHugh reappeared. He looked at Quaile with a bland surprise.

"What you doing, Quaile? Rehearsing Liberty enlightening the world?"

The manager, beyond a doubt, desired Tommy's ignorance of his share in the experiment. He blew out the candle, took it from Quaile, and gave it to Tommy.

"I was wondering," Quaile said, accepting the hint, "how it would look lighted in the third act."

McHugh smiled his thanks.

"Nothing doing," he said. "Tommy's got the correct dope on the fire laws."

When Tommy had left, McHugh still refused to explain his odd request or his secretive manner. He moved here and there about the stage with an apparent lack of purpose. Quaile, to whom he no longer said anything, strolled to the foot of the iron staircase and waited until the company began to appear. When Barbara descended, the maid still guarded her. Nevertheless Quaile went closer.

"You must give me a moment," he begged.

Barbara turned away.

"It is no use. I can't talk to you yet."

The stolid maid would not move, but Quaile had caught a wistful note of desire in Barbara's reply.

"Then afterward," he said.

But she would not speak to him again.

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him. The curtain went up, and Quaile resumed to his place in the auditorium, to face once more that tragic scene, with a feeling, caught from Mr. Hugh's manner, of utter restlessness and defeat. In a few minutes now——

The pitiful passages that had startled Barbara through the earlier part of the piece had failed. Dolly's eyes sought early again for the exit. Within, with her, Quaile manœuvred—as she had preceded Cathleen's death, drifted through his part. Those who had sought for substantiate to the performance greeted those ages empty. They too realized that the thrill moment was at hand.

The almost soundless tapping of Jessie's cane on the floor reached Quaile. Then Dolly's scream, hitherto the prelude to fatal and hopelessly spacious, sprang him back——

"Margerie! Look out!"

Willies was at the ground, snatching up the heavy candlestick, while Barbara raised her hands and shrank away from him, gasping:

"Be careful! What are you going to do to me?"

Mr. Hugh frowned. The familiar unfolded fine name to Quaile in a strangled voice: "Get out of this, Lois. Tell you if the attempt——"

A GREAT cry arose from the audience—spontaneous, intoxicated, suddenly broken off. Quaile sprang upright. He had heard a pistol shot.

A hand, appearing abnormally red and white, reached through the curtains of the scenery, had caught Willies' shoulder, had jerked him violently forward. The weight of the stage. The hand was withdrawn. From the wings a voice choked and incomprehensible, stifled.

Quaile, with one leap, was on the stage. Mr. Hugh dashed on the stage. His face was white, his hair disarranged. Above the clamour his voice carried, harsh and vindictive:

"Shut every door. On the job! Don't let a soul leave the house."

*To be continued next week*

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